RESTORING DEMOCRACY TO THE UNITED STATES CONGRESS ACT OF 2004

HON. CAROLYN B. MALONEY

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, July 22, 2004

Mrs. MALONEY. Mr. Speaker, the United States Congress should be a role model for democracies around the world. Instead, with votes that are extended up to three hours to change their outcome to allegations of bribery on the House Floor to the alleged stealing of computer files by a staffer, we are increasingly becoming a model of how not to run a democracy. That is why we am introducing the Restoring Democracy to the United States. This legislation sets forth ten changes that would ensure that the U.S. Congress will continue to be a beacon of democracy.

1. This legislation would limit the time of roll call votes to 17 minutes.

2. It would require conference committees to meet and vote before filing their conference report.

3. It would prohibit germaneness requirements for conference reports from being waived.

4. It would prohibit Members from calling the Capitol Police to have a Member removed from a room.

5. It would prohibit redistricting between censuses.

6. It would prohibit a vote on legislation unless it has been available in a searchable form online for more than 24 hours.

7. It would prohibit bribery on the House Floor.

8. It would prohibit the hacking into Member's computer files.

9. It would prohibit Committees from spending more than $25,000 a year on franked mail.

10. It would guarantee the Minority a minimum of one-third of the overall committee budget.

These ten measure would go a long way to ensure that democracy is upheld in the United States Congress. Unless we enact these safeguards, Members working together in a bipartisan manner will continue to see their work thwarted despite having a majority of Members in favor of their proposals. How many more abuses must there be before we say enough is enough? I urge all Member to support the Restoring Democracy to the U.S. Congress Act of 2004.

REMARKS BY JOHN BROWNE, GROUP CHIEF EXECUTIVE, BEYOND PETROLEUM (BP)

HON. RALPH M. HALL

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, July 22, 2004

Mr. HALL. Mr. Speaker, I would like to submit the following speech that was delivered by Mr. John Browne, Group Chief Executive of Beyond Petroleum (BP) to the Washington Press Club on March 23, 2004 entitled, ''Energy—the Medium Term Outlook.''

The level of interest in energy issues and energy security has grown steadily over the last three years. A whole series of events have reminded people both of the importance of secure energy supplies in a modern economy and of the challenges involved in matching available supplies to growing global demand.

Concerns have been expressed—here in the U.S., in Europe and in many other parts of the world. BP is the largest producer of oil and gas here in the U.S., and the second largest private company in our sector in the world. We work in over 100 countries—exploring for, producing, distributing and selling oil and gas in areas ranging from Russia to Angola from Germany to China. So we hear the concerns expressed from many sides.

I want to try and separate the concerns which are real, and which need to be managed—from those which are false, and which need to be discarded before they distract us from the serious agenda. I want in particular to emphasize the point that ''self sufficiency'' can't be achieved through protectionism. Trade is essential and we have to ensure that trade can thrive. I'll talk about the U.S. position—and I'll try and set that position in its proper context—which is the global energy scene. And I'll focus on facts—because facts should be the basis of good policy.

At one level this is a very simple issue. It is about demand and supply. The demand for energy is driven by demography and economic performance. By the number of people who can afford to buy the energy they need. Today the world's population is estimated at 6.3 bn. That figure grows by almost 10,000 an hour. In ten years time there will be almost another 1 billion people on earth. 7.2 bn by 2015 according to the most authoritative estimates from the U.N. More and more of those people will be able to afford to buy the energy they need. Economic growth continues to extend prosperity to more people every year in China and India and in other emerging economies. The Chinese economy has quadrupled in size over the last twenty years and China is now the 2nd largest single consumer of energy in the world after the U.S.

Today the world will use some 190 million barrels of oil equivalent—that is expressing all the different forms of energy supply—natural gas, coal, nuclear and so on in terms of a common unit of measurement. That energy is used in homes, in industry, in offices, in power stations and in transportation. Technology is gradually making the use of that energy more efficient. The energy intensity of each extra point of GDP growth has fallen over the last thirty years and continues to fall. But the fall is gradual.

The combination of more people and more prosperity will mean that the demand for energy will rise. The most recent estimates of the International Energy Agency suggest that world energy demand will rise by a third to around 240 mbdoe by 2015.

How can that demand be met?

Some place their faith in renewable and alternative forms of energy supply. Power from the wind and the waves. Power from solar panels. We believe those are important sources of future supply. We in BP are investing in research and development work in photovoltaics—the technology which supports solar power—and at various other forms of alternative energy supply. One day one or more of those new sources will provide a significant proportion of global energy demand. But the evidence is that day is still a long time off.

Today all the renewable and alternative forms of energy supply provide just 2.5 per cent of world demand, the bulk of which currently comes from biomass. Solar power provides just 0.001 per cent. Or to put it another way—all the solar power in the world would meet Washington's energy needs for just 6 days per year. Research continues—here in the US and in many other countries. But in every case we are still at the stage of research and experimentation. We believe renewables will provide material supplies of energy in the long term. But the long term could be 20 or 30 or more years away. The estimate from the International Energy Agency is that in 2015 they will provide only 3.3 per cent of total demand.

What sources then will meet the demand?

Some people believe that the key lies in the potential of nuclear power. That is certainly possible. But it seems a remote possibility on the timescale of a decade. Nuclear currently supplies 7 per cent of world energy demand. The first generation of nuclear stations are reaching the end of their natural lives. Last year only 2 new nuclear stations were commissioned and public doubts both about safety and about the uncertain long term costs continue to constrain new investment. In the US, no new stations have been commissioned for over two decades while in Europe the forecasts suggest that on current trends nuclear capacity in Europe will decline rather than increase over the next ten years.

And that leaves hydrocarbons—coal, oil and gas—to meet the balance. The mix will vary from one country to another. China for instance will no doubt continue to use large volumes of coal but in terms of convenience, oil and gas seem set to remain the fuels of choice. In reality, energy security is about the supply of oil and gas to meet demand which could grow, again taking the IEA figures, to around 93 mbd of oil and 64 mbdoe of natural gas by 2015. That would represent a 20 per cent increase in oil demand from today's level and a 45 per cent increase in the consumption of gas.

Can the oil and gas industry meet that demand?

In physical terms the answer is clearly yes. The resources are there. The world holds some 1,000 bn bbl of oil which has been found but not yet produced, and some 5500 tcf of natural gas—also found but not yet produced. At current consumption rates that is 40 years of oil supply and 60 years of gas. In addition the US Geological Service estimates that some 800 bn bbl of oil and 4500 tcf of natural gas are yet to be found. So in terms of physical resources, energy security is within reach.

But I believe there are two fundamental elements of risk which we have to deal with to ensure that security. The first is environmental—the risk that as the evidence of impact of human activity on the world's climate mounts we will be forced to take dramatic and potentially damaging action to avert the danger. That is a risk for the medium and longer term—not for today but we believe that precautionary action now could avert the risk. We believe that it is possible to keep atmospheric concentrations of greenhouse gases below the level at which sustainability is threatened—which on the currently best available scientific evidence is around 500 to 550 parts per million. There are various available paths by which that can be achieved—and there will be no single solution. Different countries can make different contributions to the overall objective and if we can establish a legitimate trusted emissions trading system—linked regionally—I believe we can reduce the risk without imposing a major cost on the economy. The real risk in this area is if we do nothing until it is almost too late. At that point the costs could be much higher.

The other element of risk arises from the fact that supply and demand are not typically co-located. One of the key issues of energy security over the next decade will be the growing trade in both oil and gas which will be necessary to match supply to demand. By 2015 there will be at least four